

wait until tomorrow. It was going to be awesome.

After dinner I had to go to bed early. We had to get up at 5 in the morning. On the way to Kennedy Space Center, we stopped at Waffle House to get some breakfast.

When we got there we went to the Protocol Office and got our bus passes so we could get to the grandstand.

While we were standing in line, we met this man who works at NASA in California. He was really excited, too. Then I noticed he had a really cool necklace and on it was the word NASA. It also had a blue flashing light.

I told him it was really cool. Then he asked me if I really liked it. I said yes, then he gave it to me. I was so happy.

After that, he showed me his official NASA badge. Then we got on the bus. It was a 10-minute ride to the grandstand.

When we got there we picked seats on the top row. You could see the Launch Pad perfectly. It was a long time until the shuttle went off so I went in the Saturn Building and watched a movie.

It was about the Apollo 11 mission. Neil Armstrong walked the first few steps on the moon in the Apollo mission. Then I had to go sit down.

The shuttle was about to go off. At 9 minutes the countdown stopped. Then it started again. At 1 minute until it launched, I was so excited. When it got to 10 seconds, we all went 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1.

Then it happened. It was so awesome. It was like an earthquake. The ground shook, and the noise sounded like an explosion.

It lasted about two minutes, then it was gone. It was already in space. It can go around the world in 90 minutes.

Then we got back on the bus. When we got back to the Space Center, we went to see a 3-D movie called "The Space Station." The space station is a place where astronauts can go and live.

Then we went home after our last day at the Kennedy Space Center. So ends my wonderful space vacation.●

TRIBUTE TO BRENDA S. GEIST

● Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I rise today to honor Mrs. Brenda Geist on the occasion of her retirement from the Department of the Navy. Today, we celebrate with Brenda and her family her remarkable 37 years of exemplary and distinguished service to the Navy and the Nation. It is a privilege for me to address the Chamber today in honor of Brenda.

"Far and away the best prize that life offers," Teddy Roosevelt remarked, "is the chance to work hard at work worth doing." When Brenda first began with the Navy Department at the Charleston Naval Station, she understood that supporting the men and women of the Sea Service was indeed work worth doing. Brenda has remained true to this principle ever since.

From the small Navy office on the Cooper River to the many postings around the world that followed, Brenda quickly became recognized by all for her acumen and accomplishments. Understandably, Brenda's talents were ultimately sought by the Chief of Naval Operations and the Secretary of the Navy in Washington, D.C. In 1987, Brenda was selected to serve as the director of the Congressional Travel Division

for the Navy Secretary's legislative affairs office. Past being prologue, Brenda's record of success continued unabated and has been nothing short of outstanding.

For 15 years, Brenda has been a key advisor to a succession of eight admirals. During her tenure, Brenda planned and coordinated travel around the world for more than 300 congressional delegations. A superb financial manager, Brenda also responsibly managed annual budgets of over \$1.5 million—maintaining flawless documents and receiving the highest possible praise at every audit. Every day, her work directly supported the positive, productive interaction of senior Navy leadership and the Congress.

The Pentagon on the Potomac is a long way from the little Navy office on the Cooper River. Brenda's heartfelt commitment to the Navy's officers and sailors, her guiding compass over the years, never wavered.

Sharing this adventure with Brenda is Captain Gary Geist, U.S. Navy Ret., her husband of 24 years, and their children, Jim, Stacey, Darcey, Sam, and Curtis. With the loving support of her immediate Navy family, Brenda time and again, rose to the occasion for her larger extended Navy family.

Mr. President, I invite you and our Senate colleagues to join me and offer our sincere appreciation to Brenda Geist for her years of dedication and outstanding service. We wish her and her loving family "fair winds and following seas" as they begin their next adventure together. They will be sorely missed, but most certainly never forgotten.●

HEALTH CARE HERO

● Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to salute a Health Care Hero from my home State of Oregon, the N2K Nursing Shortage Demonstration Project.

Several of my colleagues and I have come to this chamber before to discuss the growing shortage of health care workers in this country. This growing crisis has severe implications for quality patient care, retention of qualified nurses, and the future of health care delivery. Last year, Congress began to address this problem by passing the Nurse Reinvestment Act, but there is much more work to be done.

Fortunately, an exciting new program in Oregon is working to find new ways to recruit nurses. The N2K project offers paraprofessional staff from local hospitals and clinics the opportunity to secure a nursing degree while continuing to receive their current salary and benefits. Participants finish prerequisite classwork, participate in clinical training and complete an 18 month nursing degree program. Because they have come from health care institutions, these workers are more likely to continue in the nursing profession and stay in the communities where they were trained, solving some

of the pressing issues creating the nursing crisis.

But the most unique and beneficial part of this program is that recruits must be bilingual or be from a minority population. A major challenge facing health care delivery today is the severe lack of bilingual health professionals. In Oregon, and in many other places, we have large immigrant communities, primarily Spanish-speaking, and few nurses who can communicate with them easily. Many N2K participants would not have the opportunity to pursue a professional nursing career were this program not available. As nurses, they will bring a new level of comfort and care to non-English speaking patients.

Although the N2K demonstration project is still in its initial stages, it is already showing great success. Representatives from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health visited Oregon this week to meet with the participating institutions and 11 students completing the program. The visitors were deeply impressed with the project, particularly after speaking with these excellent students who look forward to a rewarding career in nursing.

Today I honor the N2K project as a Health Care Hero. N2K's vision and dedication to building a more diverse health care work force is helping Oregon find the quality workers we need to meet tomorrow's health care challenges. I look forward to the project's continuing success and wish the partnership all the best as it moves forward.●

TRIBUTE TO JOHNSON CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMIC TEAM

● Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, I rise today in the Senate to pay tribute to the Johnson Central High School Academic Team. Recently, the members of this Academic Team won their fourth straight 15th Regional Governor's Cup.

The Johnson Central Academic Team won the overall District 60 Governor's Cup Championship and went on to claim the Regional title. Along with winning the overall title, the team was awarded top honors in the Written Assessments section and the Future Problem Solving team also won first place. Also, the Quick Recall team defended their title by placing first 2 years in a row. Individual members also placed first in Mathematics, Language Arts and English Composition, and Science and Social Studies.

The citizens of Paintsville, KY are fortunate to have the 15th Regional champ's living and learning in their community. Their example of hard work and determination should be followed by all in the Commonwealth.

I congratulate the members of the Academic Team for their success. But also, I want to congratulate their peers, coaches, teachers, administrators, and parents for their support and sacrifices they've made to help the